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ABSTRACT

This survey, which was part of a campaign designed to draw attention to work and family issues important to Americans, was published simultaneously by 21 national magazines. The purpose of the survey was to obtain opinions on child care needs and family issues from readers of the magazines. Each magazine included a one-page questionnaire in its February or March 1989 issue. A total of 9,782 completed questionnaires were tabulated. Results included the following: (1) respondents wanted their elected officials to make family issues a top priority on the political agenda; (2) almost every respondent supported an employee's right to family leave; (3) respondents supported the provision of some payment during family leave; (4) respondents believed that all American children should have access to quality child care; (5) respondents wanted both government and business to invest in child care programs; (6) child care was viewed as critical to productive work and job opportunities; (7) quality was the most important child care consideration, followed by cost; (8) respondents felt that the federal government should establish minimum health and safety standards and staff-to-child ratios; (9) even respondents without children understood the growing importance of child care; and (10) respondents wanted government to pay more attention to families. Illustrative samples of responses and charts of data are included. (RH)

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TELL THE PRESIDENT: YOUR FAMILY MATTERS

Child Care Action Campaign Great American Family Tour

in partnership with Lifetime Television

Report Prepared by:
Andrea Camp and
Amy J. Moore

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TELL THE PRESIDENT: YOUR FAMILY MATTERS

Findings from the largest national magazine survey ever conducted on
family and child care issues

**Child Care Action Campaign
Great American Family Tour**

in partnership with Lifetime Television

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report would not have been possible without the generous advice and support of many people. We want to first acknowledge the individuals across the nation who took the time to fill out the survey and to "tell the President" their families matter. We are deeply indebted to the editors of twenty-one magazines who felt family issues were crucial enough to run the survey.

Among the Child Care Action Campaign Board of Directors, we would like particularly to thank Helen Blank, Myrna Blyth, John Mack Carter, Roz Chaikin, Sey Chassler, Ted Cott, and Dana Friedman.

We are grateful to Lifetime Television for investing in the Family Matters effort, and especially to Patricia Fili, Marge Sandwick, and Meredith Wagner for their dedication and wise counsel.

Finally, we thank Celinda Lake, Graham Staines and Bill Conway for their expertise on survey analysis; Pat Nicholson for "putting it all together;" Kathy Bonk for the original inspiration; OCAW Local 8-149 for assistance with typesetting; and the staffs of the Child Care Action Campaign, the Great American Family Tour, and the Communications Consortium.

Elinor Guggenheimer, President
Barbara Reisman, Executive Director
Child Care Action Campaign
June 1989

ABOUT THE SPONSORS

Formed in 1983, the CHILD CARE ACTION CAMPAIGN (CCAC) is a national coalition of leaders from a wide range of American institutions, and organizations: government, the media, corporations, unions, community, religious, and women's groups, and child care experts. CCAC's long range goal is to set in place a national system of child care using all existing resources, both public and private.

CCAC's activities focus on two broad areas:

***Information:** To collect, analyze, and disseminate information about public-private initiatives, child care legislation, and state-level efforts at planning and coordination, with a particular emphasis on the process of achieving consensus and implementation.

***Advocacy:** To bring new and influential leaders into the debate over child care from the broadest range of sectors and to focus attention on the need for a national policy on child care; and

The GREAT AMERICAN FAMILY TOUR is a non-profit, non-partisan effort spearheaded by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder; renowned pediatrician and CCAC Board member, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton; "Family Ties" Executive Producer and CCAC Board member, Gary David Goldberg; and the director of the University Southern California's Institute for the Study of Women and Men, Dr. Diana Meehan, all working to empower families to become active advocates on family policy issues.

LIFETIME TELEVISION is a venture of Hearst/ABC-Viacom Entertainment Services and is available on more than 3,800 cable systems throughout the nation serving over 41-million households. This survey, a Lifetime documentary special (hosted by Mel Harris) entitled "Hush Little Baby: The Challenge of Child Care," public service announcements and supporting community outreach activities, kick off Lifetime's on-going public service campaign "Your Family Matters." The campaign is designed to draw attention to issues of importance to American families today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	1
II. Complete Survey Data	3
III. Highlights	
1. Family Issues: A Top Priority for the President and Congress	4
2. Support for a Family Leave	5
3. Family Leave: Paid versus Unpaid	6
4. Government's Role in Child Care	7
5. Government's and Business's Joint Responsibility	8
6. Child Care: Crucial for Job Opportunities	9
7. Child Care Concerns: Quality, Cost, Safety	10
8. Federal Standards in Child Care	11
9. The Emerging Family Constituency	12
10. A Need for the Federal Government to Respond	13
IV. Charts	
1. Should Family Issues be a Top Priority for the President and Congress?	15
2. Does the Federal Government Pay Enough Attention to Child Care and other Family Concerns?	16
3. Should Every Mother and Father Have the Right to Take a Leave from Work Without Fear of Losing His/Her Job to Take Care of a Newborn or Newly-Adopted Child, or a Seriously Ill Child or Parent?	17
4. Whose Responsibility is it to Choose, Find and Pay for Child Care?	18
V. Letters from Families Across America	19
VI. A Word About This Survey	39

TELL THE PRESIDENT: FAMILY MATTERS

Introduction

Never before have Americans sent as strong a message to their political leaders: Family Matters. During February, 1989 nearly 200,000 Americans answered a survey about family issues in 21 national magazines. They took advantage of the opportunity to tell Washington how to help American families by responding to the survey, "Tell the President: Your Family Matters." In addition, thousands of magazine readers wrote letters to expand their opinions and to describe their personal situations.

The Child Care Action Campaign and the Great American Family Tour, in partnership with Lifetime Television, initiated the survey with the help of the editors of 21 national magazines. To make this effort possible, the magazines donated over \$5 million worth of advertising space. "Family Matters" is the largest magazine survey of its kind and the first opportunity for a major segment of the American public to voice their concerns and struggles about work and family to their elected officials.

Many politicians have talked a lot about family but few have made the crucial issues – child care and family leave – a legislative priority. During the 1988 Presidential campaign season, American politicians pledged to help the American family. But while politicians and legislators continue to hail the family as our most important American institution, few have taken action to support and enhance it.

Demographic trends have dramatically changed the face of both the American work force and the American family. There is an urgent need for increased leadership on behalf of families. Increasingly both parents work outside the home. More and more, families need two incomes. Single mothers financially support more families than ever before in our nation's history.

The "Family Matters" survey shows that a growing constituency of Americans have the political will to push for change on issues which help them to balance work and family. The survey measures the pulse of middle America – many who describe a feeling of being financially stuck outside of the American dream. Most importantly, "Family Matters" gave Americans a chance to speak directly to their political leaders.

Most of the "Family Matters" respondents are married working mothers with family incomes between \$20,000 and \$50,000. The men and women who responded to the magazine questionnaire represent the new American family – a family where both parents must work. Seventy one percent of our male

respondents have spouses who work for an income. Most of the respondents (82%) work outside the home. "Family Matters" respondents come from all across the country.

Yet, regardless of region, gender, income, or age, the overwhelming message from those who sent in questionnaires and who wrote long personal letters remains constant and clear: Americans want the President and the Congress to do more for families. They think every employee has a right to family leave; most think that the employees should get paid during such leave. They want government to develop policies that provide more safe, affordable, quality child care options for all parents. They also think business should be a cooperative partner in alleviating working parents' child care concerns.

American families agree with President Bush's call for a kinder, gentler nation. Family issues have made their way onto the Presidential and Congressional agendas. The Family Matters survey connects the real world concerns of the American public to their decision-makers in Washington. The Child Care Action Campaign, Great American Family Tour, and Lifetime Television hope the survey will be an important step toward transforming political rhetoric about families into action for all Americans.

This survey of opinions of women and men on child care and family issues is being published simultaneously by over twenty national magazines. Sponsored by the non-partisan advocates Child Care Action Campaign and the Great American Family Tour, this is the largest magazine survey of its kind.

TELL THE PRESIDENT YOUR FAMILY matters

LIFETIME TELEVISION, which is underwriting the survey, will premier its special documentary, *Hush Little Baby: The Challenge of Child Care* on January 23 at 9 p.m. ET/PT. The results of this important survey will be presented

to the President and released nationally in May.

What Do You Think?

1. Do you think the federal government pays enough attention to child care and other family concerns? ☐ Yes - 19 ☐ No - 80

2. Do you think family issues should be a top priority for the President and Congress? ☐ Yes - 74 ☐ No - 24

3. Are your child care concerns with:
(check the three most important):
☐ Finding care - 30
☐ Cost - 37
☐ Reliability - 41
☐ Safety - 30
☐ Making emergency arrangements - 15
☐ Quality of care - 84

4. Check the statement(s) you agree with:

- ☐ It is the sole responsibility of parents to choose, find and pay for child care. - 23
☐ While the choice of child care should be left to parents, government should help make good, affordable child care available for all children who need it. - 65
☐ While the choice of child care should be left to parents, business should help make good, affordable child care available for all children who need it. - 62

5. Please circle how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements—or if you have no opinion, check the box

The federal government should develop policies to make child care more available and affordable. 10

1 5 6 7 10 3 10 4 16 ☐ 2

State governments should develop policies to make child care more available and affordable. 11

15 3 21 3 10 4 14 ☐ 2

Employers should develop policies to make child care more available and affordable. 12

35 1 19 3 11 4 11 ☐ 2

The federal government should set minimum standards for child care centers including health and safety standards and staff-to-child ratios. 13

18 2 4 3 7 4 8 ☐ 2

The federal government should expand tax breaks to help parents pay for child care. 14

1 4 2 13 3 1 4 12 ☐ 1

The federal government should provide money to help parents pay for child care. 15

1 2 2 10 3 23 4 33 ☐ 6

6. Should every mother and father have the right to take a leave from work without fear of losing his/her job to take care of a newborn or newly-adopted child, or a seriously ill child or parent? 16

93 ☐ Yes - Answer Q.7
5 ☐ No - 43
1 ☐ No Opinion - 9 } Skip to Q.8

7. If "Yes," should this leave be: 17 ☐ Fully paid - 26 ☐ Unpaid - 15
☐ Partially paid - 43 ☐ Don't know - 9

Note: THESE NUMBERS ADD UP TO THE 93% YES IN QUESTION #6

8. Poor single parents with young children should have:

- ☐ Child care, to take advantage of a work opportunity or job training program - 75
☐ Financial support, to stay home with pre-school children - 4
☐ Only those benefits that other parents get - 19

9. Number of children under 18 living in your home: 19
☐ None - Skip to Q.12 30
☐ One - 25
☐ Two - 25
☐ Three - 7
☐ Four or more - 2

10. In what age categories? (Check all that apply):

☐ Under 2 - 42 ☐ 2-5 - 45 ☐ 6-9 - 28 ☐ 10 or older - 26

11. How many require child care services? 21
☐ None - Skip to Q.12 24
☐ One - 44
☐ Two - 22
☐ Three - 4
☐ Four or more - 1

12a. What do you pay for child care per week? 22
☐ Nothing - 0 ☐ \$101 to \$200 - 17
☐ Under \$50 - 25 ☐ Over \$200 - 4
☐ \$51 to \$100 - 46

12b. If you pay for child care, does your family use the current dependent care tax credit (DCTC) when filing your income taxes? 23
☐ Yes - 72
☐ No - 26

Who Are You?

13. Age 24
☐ Under 25 - 9 ☐ 30 to 35 - 30 ☐ 46 to 59 - 10
☐ 25 to 29 - 21 ☐ 36 to 45 - 21 ☐ 60 and over - 6

14. Sex 25
☐ Male - 12 ☐ Female - 88

15. Marital Status 26
☐ Married - 72 ☐ Living with partner - 4
☐ Widowed - 2 ☐ Divorced - 10
☐ Separated - 2 ☐ Single - 10

16. Do you work for an income? (If "Yes," how many hours?) 27
☐ Yes, under 15 hours a week - 5
☐ Yes, 15 to 34 hours a week - 14
☐ Yes, 35 or more hours a week - 63
☐ No, do not work for an income - 18

17. Is your household income: (before taxes) 28
☐ Less than \$20,000 - 17
☐ \$20,000 to \$34,999 - 27
☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999 - 24
☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999 - 20
☐ \$75,000 and over - 11

18. If married, does your spouse work for an income? 29
☐ Yes - 91
☐ No - 9

19. What is your ZIP code? 30-31 By Census breakdown:

Send your survey with any comments to "Your Family Matters," 6th Floor, 666 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10010
Northeast 24
Midwest 21
South 32
West 23

CCAC

Child Care Action Campaign



LIFETIME
TELEVISION

Family
Tour

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Respondents want their elected officials to make family issues a top priority on the political agenda.

RESULTS:

- * An overwhelming majority (74%) think family issues should be a top priority for the President and Congress;
- * Support for legislative action on family issues is strong among all female respondents in each household income bracket; support was as high among women with household incomes under \$20,000 (78%) as it was for women with household incomes above \$50,000 (76%);
- * Female employment status did not substantially alter the level of support; 78% percent of employed women and 70% percent of women not working outside the home thought family issues should be a top priority;
- * The majorities of both women (76%) and men (53%) identified family issues as a priority for elected officials;
- * Support for family issues is strong among parents of young children. Seventy five percent of fathers and 84% of mothers with children under the age of two think support for family issues should be legislative priorities;
- * Across the country, female respondents want family issues to be a top priority: Northeast - 78%; Midwest - 77%; South - 75%; West - 76%.

While Congress continues to debate different approaches to family policy, Americans call upon government to make family issues a priority immediately. Men join women, homemakers join women who work outside the home, the more fortunate join the poor to describe the tensions families face daily as they struggle to make ends meet, let alone try to grasp the American dream of house, car, education, and good health. Family issues transcend ideological pigeonholes. These issues are real and mainstream American concerns.

A twenty-five-year-old mother from Lorain, Ohio writes, "I love my son and he deserves more. I do not want my son to ever realize he is poor." A single mother who works from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. to make \$21,000 a year in Topeka, Kansas adds, "Myself and my son are caught in the middle. I make too much to receive

Government assistance [i.e.: utility, medical care, etc.] but not enough to meet these needs myself."

This year, Americans want President Bush and Congress to put family issues at the very top of their agendas. This desire for government involvement crosses all income levels, regions, marital categories, those employed and not employed, and those with or without children. As one mother put it, "We need to get the government's head out of the sand and off their butts and get something done." The message is loud and clear: "Family Matters."

2. Almost every respondent supports an employee's right to family leave.

RESULTS:

- * An overwhelming majority (93%) agrees that every mother and father has the right to take leave from work to care for a newborn or newly adopted child, or a seriously ill child or parent without losing his or her job;
- * Fathers (83%), as well as mothers (96%), support family leave;
- * Even women without children under the age of 18 (91%) and single women (94%) support an employee's right to family leave;
- * Across the country, support for family leave is consistently high, from the Northeast (96%) to the South (93%).

Americans, whether they are parents or not, feel that employees should have the right to care for their newborn or newly adopted children or to care for a seriously ill child or parent without losing their job. They do not want to be forced to choose between their family and their job.

One mother from the South says, "Six weeks is barely enough time to recover from labor, to return to work, and carry a full work load." She continues, "I have worked at the same job for nine years. It took me eight years to accrue enough sick leave to take off two weeks before and ten weeks after the birth of my baby. I now have no sick leave until it accrues with time. I hope I don't get sick."

When placed in the context of current legislation, these findings become even more significant. Congress is currently considering legislation to create a new minimum standard that gives employees a right to an unpaid, job-guaranteed leave of up to ten weeks to care for a newborn or newly-adopted child, or a seriously ill child or parent. For the past five years, Congress has failed to pass this legislation, in part because Southern legislators have not understood that their constituents

support the leave. "Family Matters" results indicate that Southerners overwhelmingly (93%) support an employee's right to family leave. Similar strong support for a family leave reverberates across the country.

3. Respondents support some payment during family leave.

RESULTS:

- * Among 93% of respondents who agree that every mother and father should have the right to family leave, 69% think parents should receive at least some payment during family leave;

- * Among those who favor paid leave, 37% want it fully paid and 63% want it partially paid;

- * Nearly three quarters of mothers support paid leave (74%) and close to two third of fathers (59%) support paid leave;

- * Among mothers, there is more support for partially paid leave (47%) than for fully paid (27%) or unpaid leave (12%). The same holds true for fathers: 38% support partially paid leave, while 20% support an unpaid leave, and 21% support a fully paid leave;

- * Among women, support for fully paid leave is constant across the United States, including support from 29% of Southern woman;

- * The level of support for paid family leave does not vary among households according to income: 74% of women whose household incomes were less than \$20,000 a year support paid leave as well as 69% of women whose household incomes were over \$50,000.

While many believe that families should not have to forfeit their wages when they take leave to care for their new babies or a sick parent, the current family leave legislation before Congress provides only an unpaid leave. Political pundits believe that little support exists for paid leave. "Family Matters" respondents prove such pundits wrong.

Lower income families, especially single poor mothers, obviously have the greatest financial need for a paid family leave. Yet, respondents do not view a paid leave as welfare, but as a right of all working Americans. In fact, a majority of women in all income levels supports some type of paid family leave.

The wide range of support indicates that paid leave is not as radical a policy as opponents suggest. Instead, such support suggests that an unpaid family leave is the very least we can do for our families.

4. Respondents believe that all American children should have access to quality child care.

RESULTS:

- * Sixty-five percent of "Family Matters" respondents feel that the government should help improve child care and make it more affordable for all children;
- * Among female respondents, 73% with household incomes under \$20,000 and 65% with household incomes over \$50,000 agree that the government should help;
- * Even women who are not employed outside of the home (57%) support government assistance to help make child care available for all children who need it;
- * While male respondents agree less readily that government should help, 56% of males with children under two understand the pressing need for government assistance in improving care and making it affordable for all children.

All children, regardless of their family's income, race or social standing should have access to good child care while their parents work outside the home. In letter after letter to the magazines which participated in the survey, parents send a single, simple message to President Bush. Many use the same phrase: "children are our future." She continues, " – only if we can protect them and educate them." Always, these letters refer to all of our American children.

No longer can the United States categorize child care as a social welfare concern, focusing only on low income families. Likewise, we can not regard adequate care as a luxury for a perceived class of selfish career mothers. Most families need two incomes to make ends meet. Single parents must rely only on one income. Parents deserve to know that their children are safe and happy while they earn a living and support our economy. Their children deserve the opportunity for a strong and healthy beginning.

All children should have access to quality child care which ensures that they get the educational, social, and health benefits essential to growth at their particular stage of development. Anything less is unfair, potentially irreversible and dangerous.

5. The public wants both government and business to invest in child care programs.

RESULTS:

- * A vast majority of the respondents agree that both Federal (72%) and state (74%) government should develop policies to make child care more available and affordable;
- * Strong support exists (76%) for employers to develop child care policies. This support is strong even among those women who are not employed (72%) and could not take advantage of such programs;
- * A minority of "Family Matters" respondents (23%) feel that it is the sole responsibility of parents to choose, find, and pay for child care.

Struggling American families want relief. Few hope for magic solutions. None describe the desire for a "hand-out." (In fact, a majority (74%) of respondents believe that the Federal government should expand tax breaks to help parents pay for child care; 75% of all respondents believe that poor single parents with young children should get child care to take advantage of a work opportunity. Clearly however, from the "Family Matters" survey response and from the letters, the American family is seeking help from the country's two most powerful institutions: government and business.

One mother writes, "as a working mother and a Federal employee, I am ashamed of the child care programs provided in the United States. Several countries in Europe provide child care at little or no cost to working parents as an incentive." Another mother adds, "My husband and I are both in the military and have a 21 month old son. Needless to say, it is very difficult to find a child care provider who will work the long hours that we do and who will provide temporary care during absences due to military missions. Sure, we can get out of the military; however, we have too much invested in the service." (This is despite the fact that the military has invested substantially – way beyond civilian employers – in family support services.)

Both these mothers as well as a majority of others describe new ideas: "The governments, both Federal and state, need to be more involved in this problem. One idea is to subsidize child care." These families understand that every sector benefits from child care and every sector should invest in care. Another suggestion: "Private businesses need to get involved by establishing day care centers within business for their employees. As a result, better productivity on the job when parents know their children are in qualified hands."

The Federal government's involvement in child care consists of a patchwork of subsidies, with no overriding policy to guide the development of additional supply, to increase access, or to improve quality. Likewise, employers have stepped up their support for child care dramatically in the past decade but still only 3,500 employers (out of six million) offer any form of assistance. How can our two most powerful institutions let our families down? The parents' suggestions are well-meaning and good. We need to listen.

6. Child Care is critical to productive work and job opportunities.

RESULTS:

- * Seventy five percent of "Family Matters" respondents feel that poor single parents with young children should have child care to take advantage of a work opportunity compared to only 4% who feel these parents should receive financial support to stay at home;
- * Among female respondents who are not employed, 70% favor child care assistance while only 8% think financial support to enable them to stay at home is a good idea;
- * Women with household incomes less than \$20,000 (81%) and above \$50,000 (79%) think child care is essential for poor single parents to take advantage of work or job training opportunities;
- * A majority of male respondents (52%) without children under 18 think poor single parents with young children should have child care to take advantage of a work opportunity or job training;
- * Respondents from all regions of the country believe poor single parents should have child care so that they may take advantage of work opportunities; 76% of respondents from the South, 74% from the Mid-West, and 79% from both the Northeast and the West.

Americans would rather help the poor to work by providing child care to their children during the day than to provide financial support to enable them to stay at home. Child care is a necessary support of the good old American work ethic, for both those parents who require welfare or those who have high paying jobs.

One mother writes: "I live in a rural town where most people get paid minimum wage or they are on welfare. I seen [sic] where it was better for a parent to stay at home with the child and not work."

With the looming labor shortage in the United States, the economy needs all the skilled and unskilled labor it can attract. Yet, by

not supplying quality child care, the country may lose thousands of parents who would otherwise work. One mother with three children of her own and three from her husband's previous marriage writes, "I am now leaving my job because we have no deduction except the children and our child care credit which doesn't even come close to what I pay in child care." She continues, "The sad part of our life, is no matter how hard we try, we'll never own a home, and we'll never afford things that are important such as medical insurance, dental visits."

To enable families to work hard and productively, the United States must begin to pay attention to work/family concerns.

7. Quality is the most important child care consideration followed by cost.

RESULTS:

- * Overwhelmingly, respondents choose quality of child care as their biggest concern (84%) followed by cost (57%) and then safety (50%);
- * A strong majority of both female (86%) and male (75%) respondents rank quality most highly;
- * Seventy one percent of female respondents with a household income under \$20,000 and 63% with a household income between \$20,000 and \$34,999 rank cost as a concern. Almost half of all women with household incomes over \$50,000 say cost is a significant issue (49%);
- * Other top priority concerns listed by respondents include safety (50%), reliability (41%), and finding care (30%).

Whether father or mother, rich or poor, Southern or Northeastern, Americans are most concerned with the quality of child care which their children receive. A direct relationship exists between quality and cost. Many quality options are not accessible to working parents simply because they are out of parents' price range. Not surprisingly, cost is the second largest concern.

To improve the quality of child care, the United States needs to focus on the wages and benefits for child care providers. One woman from Reno, Nevada writes, "I take my two children to a nationwide child care chain. My complaint is that those day care workers are only getting minimum wage! I have seen a large turnover in care givers because of this. There is also insecurity among the children because of the inconsistency of who takes care of them."

A frustrated child care provider adds, "I make \$1.50/hour per child. \$1.50!! It makes me very angry when I hear people talk about the high cost of child care! \$1.50 an hour for becoming a child's part-time mother." Unfortunately, without an investment from the public and private sectors, when providers' salaries are raised, parent fees rise as well.

Child care is extremely expensive for most families. One woman calculates, "I am a single mother of three children, ages 2, 5, and 6. My income from a 40 hour a week job is about \$375. During that week, I pay \$220 for child care for my children. After buying groceries, putting gas in my car, and paying for the kids' lunches, I have \$9.95 left. This doesn't even include rent or utilities." She ends, "I'd be better off, financially, if I quit my job and went on welfare but then I will have lost the battle I have fought so hard to win since my marriage ended."

8. The Federal government should establish minimum health and safety and staff-to-child ratios.

RESULTS:

* Reflecting concern for quality, 83% of respondents want the Federal government to set minimum standards for child care centers.

* Seventy one percent of parents who pay less than \$50 per week for child care support Federal standards as do 79% of parents who pay over \$101 per week for child care.

* Even males with no children under 18 years of age (65%) think the Federal government should set minimum standards for child care centers: 79% of fathers with children under two years of age support Federal standards.

"Family Matters" respondents want the Federal government to set minimum standards for child care centers. The survey question does not acknowledge existing state standards which vary drastically from state to state. In some states, the regulations meet the child care experts' definition of quality, while other states fail to guarantee even minimal levels of safety and health.

One mother from Indianapolis, Indiana writes directly to President Bush, "I recently applied for a job at a day care center in a very affluent part of town. I thought it would give my child a chance to be with other children while giving us a little extra money. What I found was a small dirty room that smelled like dirty diapers. The children (2 year-olds) looked pale and their hair looked like straw from lack of sunshine and fresh air."

The Federal government should set minimum standards in consultation with national experts and with the states in five basic areas: child/staff ratios; group size; training of providers; parental access; health and safety standards. All child care programs should meet these minimum standards and the Federal government should build incentives to encourage them to do so.

9. Even respondents without children understand the growing importance of child care although nothing is as convincing as personal experience.

RESULTS:

* For every question, the data are most supportive of child care and family policy when the respondents (those closest to the issue) have children. However, many respondents without children under 18 support family issues too. For instance, while 84% of female respondents with children under two think that family issues should be a top priority for the President and Congress, so do 67% of female respondents without children;

* A majority of men (53%) think child care should be a top priority – those men with children under two think so more strongly (75%) and those men without children less strongly (41%). For men with no children, the data reveals less support for family policy, primarily because this male sample is considerably older than the group as a whole (57% are 46 or older).

A remarkable trend is growing in the United States: even individuals without young children understand the potentially severe and long term ramifications of the lack of a viable family policy in this country. Many of these individuals are so fed up that they are ready – and willing – to take action. One man from Coconut Grove, Florida writes, "I do feel that child care and education are issues of top priority. I follow what my Congressman's stand is on these issues. I would not vote to reelect him, and I won't."

Other individuals who support the need for a national family policy may understand or be affected by a friend or relative's struggle to balance work and family. One woman from Granada Hills, California writes, "I am a grandmother of six, so I speak and have some experience regarding child care. Whenever my daughters are stuck for a baby sitter, guess who comes to the rescue? You got that right!" She continues to

describe her perception of the families' plight, " My daughters all have to work to stretch the family income. Their husbands have good jobs but it's impossible to get by on one salary."

Even Americans without children support family issues although nothing is as convincing as personal experience. Perhaps that – the lack of personal experience – is the reason Congress has been sluggish about passing family and child care legislation. Most Congressional families still mirror the former "traditional" family, where father financially supports the family solely.

The nation wholeheartedly supports our basic American foundation, the family, and wants to ensure that the President and Congress does as well.

10. "Family Matters" respondents want government to pay more attention to families.

RESULTS:

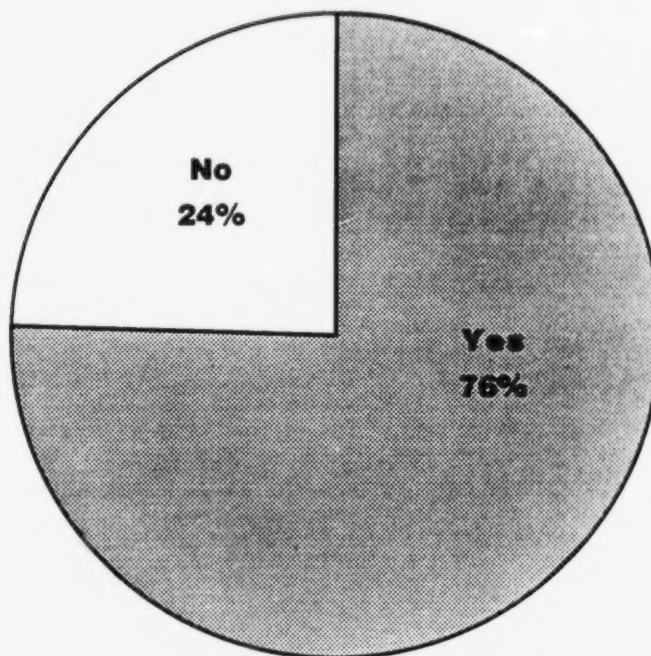
- * "Family Matters" respondents (80%) think the Federal government does not pay enough attention to child care and other family concerns;
- * Vast majorities of mothers (87%) and fathers (56%) think the Federal government doesn't pay enough attention to family concerns. Parents with young children feel this most strongly with 67% of fathers and 84% of mothers feeling the Federal government doesn't pay enough attention to family needs;
- * In addition to the 72% that think the Federal government should develop policies to make child care more available and affordable, 74% of respondents want state governments to develop policies as well.

Universally, Americans want President Bush to understand and to respond to the economic tensions of everyday American family life. They want U.S. leaders to scrutinize legislative proposals and policy options as if their own families were at stake. Americans want government to provide parents with a multitude of options to help bridge the work and family worlds. They want policies to ensure the best for families.

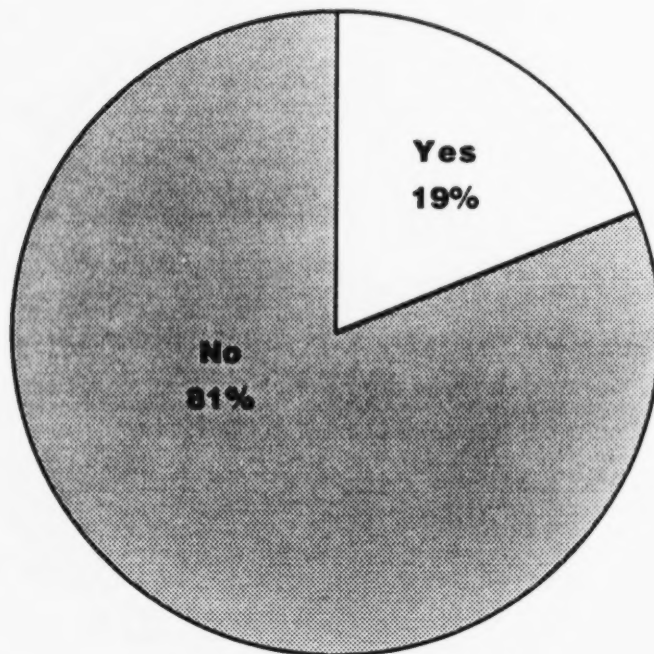
"Family Matters" sends a resounding message to political leaders across the nation: Political leaders can no longer cast aside family concerns. The public will not remain silent. A new family constituency has emerged – a constituency that includes an extremely broad cross section of Americans.

In giving thousands of Americans a voice, "Family Matters" can change the nature of family politics in America. Politicians, if they listen to their constituents, will have no choice but to transform rhetoric into meaningful policies for all Americans and their families. A welfare mother from Ohio writes, "I believe George Bush will help all of America through his child care policies. After all he has to take care of his grandchildren."

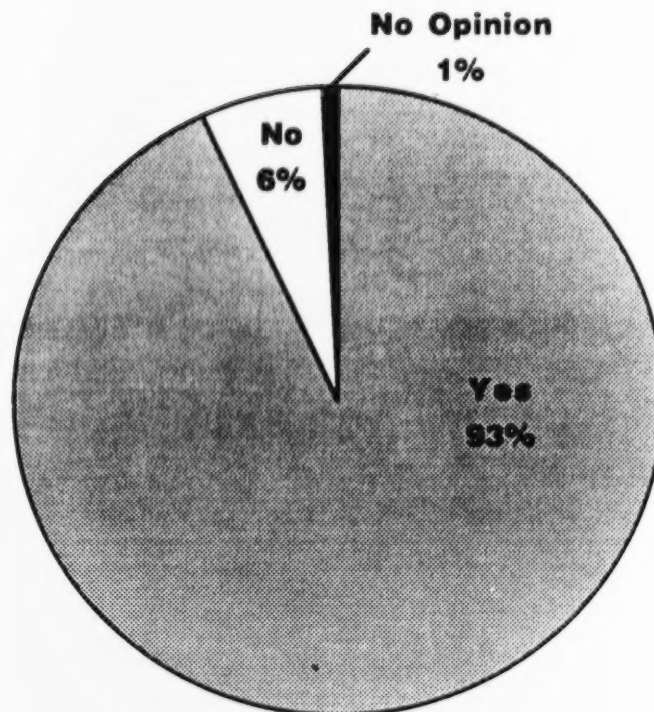
**Do You Think Family Issues
Should Be A Top Priority For The
President And Congress?**



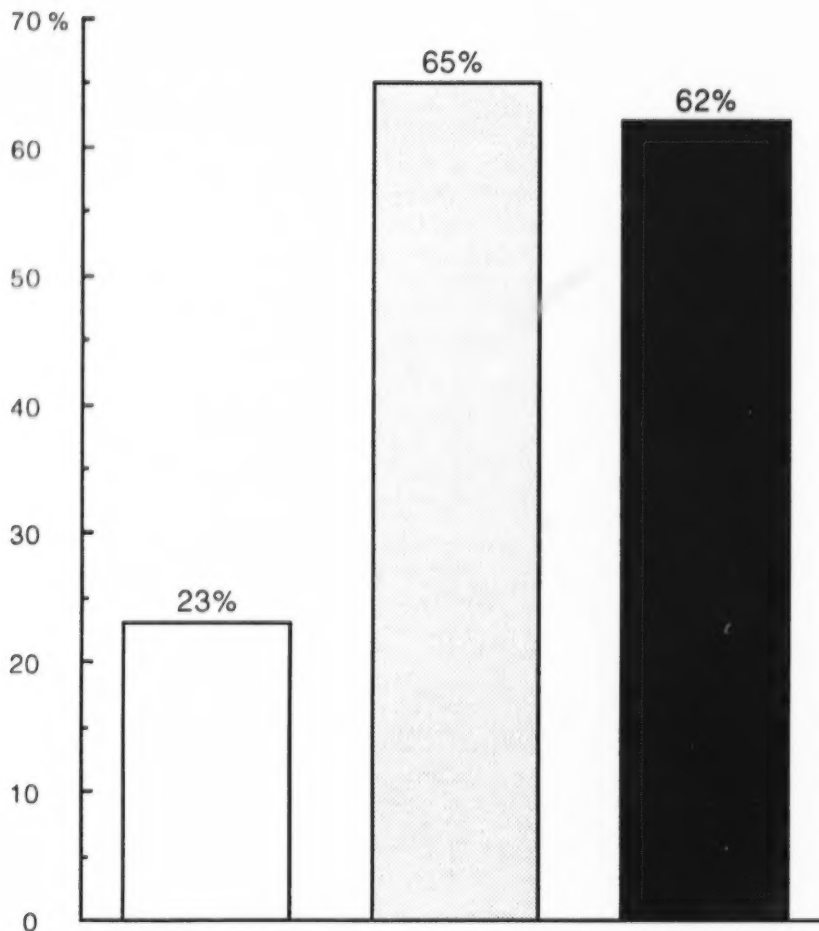
**Do You Think The Federal Government
Pays Enough Attention To Child Care
And Other Family Concerns?**



**Should Every Mother and Father Have The Right to Take a
Leave From Work Without Fear of Losing His/Her Job to
Take Care of a Newborn or Newly-Adopted Child, or a
Seriously Ill Child or Parent?**



- ☐ It is the sole responsibility of parents to choose, find and pay for child care.
- ☐ While the choice of child care should be left to parents, government should help make good, affordable child care available for all children who need it.
- ☒ While the choice of child care should be left to parents, business should help make good, affordable child care available for all children who need it.



2/8/89

This survey is an important part of everyone's lives if the info. gets to the white house - the president. For those who cannot pay for child care because of financial reasons they're ~~not~~ the ones who need some assistance. And for those like myself who would still like to have my children watched after school, we need to know that there's a resource center to help locate the help. A lot of children, like mine, often have to come home, lock themselves indoors, "don't answer the phone unless it's mommy on the answering machine", & don't ^{answer} get the door unless you can see their face & you know who it is - otherwise they can yell their

name & msg. to my kids thru ^{closed} the door.

It's scary to know that we have to take so many precautions to secure the utter most safety for our children - but that's the ~~sign~~ sign of the ages.

My children, when the sitter can come & stay here, are watched @ the most 2 days a wk. Some wks not at all. Some wks I don't have the money. I would like to know that there is some support out there, when needed. I love my kids - & I want the best for them - Sometimes it's just not possible.

Thank you for the survey & your time to read this. Have you thought of petitions? or having this distributed ^{(as an insert} in the churches wkly bulletin?

Hope something will come of
this. And I am one parent
that is grateful for people
like you.

Thanks You so much,
our children are our future -
only if we can protect them &
educate them

Sincerely,
a concerned mom

Indianapolis, IN

Dear President Bush,

I recently applied for a job at a Day Care Center in a very affluent part of town. I thought it would give my child a chance to be with other children while giving us a little extra money. (it paid \$3.50 an hr.)

What I found was a small dirty room with no windows that smelled like dirty diapers. The children (2 yr olds) looked pale and their hair looked like straw from

lack of sunshine & fresh air. I asked the girl I was working with if we could take the children outside it was 60° & sunny, she said, "No, we usually don't do that."

Needless to say I picked up my daughter & her things never to return, I was very upset by what I saw. Something needs to be done before this country is run by children who have spent their entire childhood in this kind of environment.

Sincerely,
G. C.

Dear L.H.J.,
I am a single (separated)
mother of three children, ages 2, 5,
+ 6.

My income from a 40 a week
job is about 375.00 a week. During
that week I pay 220.00 for child
care for my children. After buying
groceries, filling gas in my car, and
paying for the kids lunches, I
have 9.65 left.

This doesn't even include
rent or utilities which I pay with
the money my children's father
sends me, (when he can afford
it).

I make "too much money" to
qualify for state assistance, so
I have to lie to the Housing
Authority to get help with paying
my rent.

I'd be better off financially,
if I quit my job and went on
Welfare, but then I will have lost
the battle I have fought so hard

to win since my marriage ended. That, of course, is to provide my children with a home, beds to sleep in and food to eat. And more importantly, to teach them that they must work for anything in life that is worth having. For me, it's dignity.

A Federally subsidized child care program would get more parents working (and paying taxes), and I would dare to say would cost much less than most of the nuclear warheads our country is building right now.

Good luck with your survey. I'm certain you will get more results than you have anticipated!

Sincerely,

D. D.

(Don't turn me in to the Housing Authority, please!)

24 February 1989

To Whom It May Concern:

I am commenting on the lack of child care in the U.S. My husband and I are both in the military and have a 21 month old son. Needless to say, it is very difficult to find a child care provider who will work the long hours that we do and will provide temporary care during absences due to military missions. Sure, we can get out of the military; however, we have too much invested in the service.

After my son was born, I went through three providers within a four month period. The first provider was inexperienced in child care. The second provider had marital problems. The third was in it only for the money and provided inadequate care. I was finally fortunate enough to find a provider who is truly dedicated to her job and the children.

The governments, both federal and state, need to be more involved in this problem. One idea is to subsidize child care. Financial aid to providers will encourage better qualified professionals to enter into the field and provide better child care.

Private businesses need to get involved by establishing day care centers within the business for their employees. As a result, better productivity in the job when parents know their children are in qualified hands.

Businesses should also take a look at their maternity leave policy. See what the long range effects are in giving employees, both male and female, time off after the birth of a baby. Studies are revealing the importance of parents in the bonding process.

In summary, there must be a solution to the child care problem in America. If nothing is done about it today, society will pay for it tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Q.

P.

Milliani, HI

I am concerned about "maternity leave." Many pregnant women are working until they go into labour, because they have to save their "time off" for after the baby is born. 6 weeks (the average maternity leave taken) is barely enough time to recover from labour, to return to work & carry a full workload as many do.

I have worked at the same job for 9 years. It took me 8 years to accrue enough sick leave to take off 2 weeks before & 10 weeks after the birth of my baby. I now have no sick leave, until it accrues again, with time. I hope I don't get sick. I could only take off 3 months without affecting my benefits at work.

I am also concerned about teenage pregnancy & the resulting high mortality rate for newborns. Unfortunately here in the South it seems to be accepted as the normal way of life.

This country is not taking care of its people, but spending far too much money on defence, research into space & paying high salaries to high ranking government-officials. The money needs to be spent on children, education & health care.

I do feel that child care and Education
Are issues that Top priority. I do
Follow what my congressman's stand is on this
issue. So far, I would not Vote to back it
him, and I won't.

B. L.

January 26, 1989

"Your Family Matters"

6th Floor

650 Avenue of the Americas

New York, New York 10011

Dear Your Family Matters Committee:

I am the Mother of a 5 1/2 month old SON. Adam was born on August 14, 1988.

My family is on ADC welfare and Food Stamps. My husband works part-time for \$3.35 per hour as a cleaning person for the Lorain City School System.

My family income is less than \$10,000.00 a year and I have been looking for a job in the Lorain / Cleveland, Ohio area.

Businesses will not hire me because I have a baby at home. Employers are afraid I'll take off work when the baby is ill. I am registered with the Lorain County WIN program, they help women find jobs and the Government gives free Child Care for the indigent.

I am also a High School graduate from Lorain High School, Class of 1982.

I also attended Lorain Business College. I had good grades when I was in school and I received numerous awards.

I also have 6 years Secretarial work experience, I've received a Hard-Worker award from Manpower Temporary Services.

My husband would like for me to return to work + finish my College education.

He even offered to babysit our son. I've helped our budget in the past.

Although my family is poor, we have alot of love and togetherness.

The employers and Government should realize we need good, reasonable child care, after all, "Our children are our future, our world."

I love my son and he deserves more. I do not want my son to ever realize he is poor.

2

My son sleeps in my and my husband's room. we live in a 1-bedroom apartment and we cannot afford to move.

My husband and I signed up for Section 8, and we were denied. We were never given a reason for this.

I would like to work to earn my self-respect back as well as earn a wage.

I believe George Bush will help all of America through his Child-Care policies, After all he has to take care of his grandchildren, we always take care of our own.

Yes, America needs Child Care + we need it now!

Sincerely,
Mrs. C.

d.

Lorain, Ohio 44052

2-6-87

I am a good mother of 6, so I
speak a some experience regard-
ing "Child Care," when ever my
daughters are "stuck" for a baby
sitter, guess who comes to the
rescue? You got that right!

My daughters all have, to
work to stretch the family
income. Their husbands have
"Good" jobs, but its impossible
to get by on one salary - I
Take Care of my grandchild-
ren only in emergencies. But
those happen often enough
due to Childrens illness,
Baby sitters unable to cope
with their work schedules
etc. there is no place to
leave a sick child, no one
available late evening & falli-
door - there is a great

need for 2 1/2 hr. day care cen-
ters with special facilities
to acc. sick children —

Russia provides such
a type of child care — on site
in many work places — so
mothers (or fathers) can visit
their children during lunch
hours — why can't we do
as much or more? —

Babies & small children
are one of our most precious
& fragile resources — we
need to develop this
child care policy as soon
as possible — & the Federal
Govt. is the only one strong
enough to get it started
nation wide —

P.

M. C.

Granada Hills CA —

I'M MINDING THE KIDS!!!

I am an unlicensed babysitter who cares for 6 kids under the age of 5. ~~the~~ Usually they come at different times on different days, so they're not all here at once. I decided to babysit 7½ years ago after our first son was born and I wanted & needed to stay home with him but couldn't afford to give up our second income. I began caring for 2 kids but now I need to watch 3 times that to make ends meet.

I think there should be a minimum wage for child care givers like myself. I make \$1.50/hr. per child, \$1.60!! It makes me very angry when I hear people talk about the "high cost of child care"! \$1.50 an hour for becoming a child's part-time mother. I make sure the children are safe, happy, healthy and having a wonderful day. I nurse them when they are sick. I give medicine when necessary (I draw the line at cough medicine, tylenol & antibiotics). ~~the~~ I listen to them when they are sad & help them sort out their feelings. One of "my" kids is having a pretty hard time at home - she requires

extra attention & love & support. I help them when they are being potty trained or weaned. I help them learn colours, numbers, shapes & letters. We go to fun places - the library, fire station, to plays & dance concerts. I feed them, play with them, read to them & most importantly keep them SAFE and LOVED. All this for \$1.50/hr. - and I hear people say they can't afford day care! Since all but one of my kids are part-time, I need to take these many kids to make enough money between my husband and myself.

Don't get me wrong. I love my job. I love all these kids as if they were my own (we now have a 3 1/2 along with our 7 1/2 yr. old, and would like one more). I get alot of love & joy from "my" kids and have a wonderful relationship with all the parents. I celebrate each child's birthday with a party & presents. I buy art & craft supplies & use my car to go on field trips. When one of them is sick or when I am sick, there's no workman's comp. or sick day pay for me. No vacation time and

since some parents are also self-employed, no paid holiday.

So I guess I feel like for all I do & for all it means to be "just a babysitter" and all the energy it takes, there should be government support for ME to assure that I get what my job is worth - and that's ALOT more than \$1.50 hr. Thank you for letting me speak out!

Please let me elaborate on the normal American family:

As of now I am a working mother of three children. I have a new husband who has three children of his own. As a whole our families are terrific. The sad part of our life, is no matter how hard we try, will never own a home, and never afford things that are important, such as medical insurance, dental visits etc. We live a special but moderate life. Yet I feel our children will lose the flair for achievement because there are no goals to reach in our family. If we try to save to purchase a home, something always comes up & our savings dwindle, if we can save any at all.

I am now leaving my job, because we have no deduction except the children & our child care credit, which doesn't even come close to what I pay in child care. Therefore, if my husband & I file deductions on our W4's, the situation will make more than I do. It is not worth leaving my children 10 hours a day 5 days a week. If the government could make a standard cost of child

Care, this would be the answer.
Surely its doesn't take more than
what I make a week to take
care of 3 children! Especially in
a state operated child care home.
She is funded by the state,
and gets many breaks, but that
doesn't give us breaks!

Thank you
for your time.

R. S.J.

A WORD ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to obtain opinions on various child care needs and family issues, from readers of 21 different monthly or weekly magazines:

LADIES' HOME JOURNAL
BETTER HOMES & GARDENS
FAMILY CIRCLE
WORKING MOTHER
PARENTS
BABY TALK
GOOD HOUSEKEEPING
MS
SOAP OPERA DIGEST
AMERICAN BABY
ESSENCE

CHANGING TIMES
MONEY
EXECUTIVE FEMALE
NEW WOMAN
COSMOPOLITAN
PEOPLE
WASHINGTONIAN
REDBOOK
VISTA MAGAZINE
NEW REPUBLIC

Methodology

Each of the above-participating magazines included a one-page questionnaire in its (or one of its) February or March 1989 issues. Respondents who completed the questionnaire sent them back – at their own expense – to Audits & Surveys. After manual checking to eliminate only partially completed questionnaires, Audits & Surveys then tabulated results.

The budget for this study called for tabulating the first 500 usable questionnaires from each of the participating magazines, with a tabulation cut-off date of March 3, 1989. A total of 9,782 completed questionnaires were tabulated. All but a few magazines met the 500 questionnaire target, with most exceeding 500 returns by a very substantial margin.